

WOOD CHOPPING CODE LAID DOWN FOR A.E.F.

An Axe Swinger Explains the Fuel Problem and Why It Pays in the End to Play Under All the Rules

"Say nothing but saw wood."

It's a good motto, all right, and, like most mottos, it means awfully well. But if you're a member of an A.E.F. woodchopper's contingent, you can't live up to it. You can't saw wood—French wood, wet wood, briar wood, fire wood, every blooming kind of wood, without saying a great deal.

You have to say your great deal not only in English, but in French, for no wood is chopped in this country unless under the personal supervision of a French forest officer, who is a sort of game warden, tree warden, headman and universal Gifford Pinchot combined. He is a necessary officer, for people have been cutting wood in France for a long, long time. Even before Mr. Columbus, the first Italian immigrant to our shores, set sail because he knew the world was round—O, they were saying nothing but sawing wood in France. So, because France is only about as large as New York plus about half of Pennsylvania, and in spite of the fact that certain hardy trees have fooled the cutters by growing up again, it can be seen that, unless someone looked out for the wood supply, there wouldn't be any wood in France—except, of course, the wood of certain American outfits brought with them under their hats.

But you can't burn wood in your dome without burning your hair, too; and hair, even the best grade of it, makes a most unsatisfactory fire. You can't go out and cut down trees as if they were Boche, promiscuous like, because the French law prohibits it. Even if you fouted the law—which you wouldn't—you'd only be cheating yourself, because if everybody did it then everybody, within a short space of time, would be out of luck for wood. There's no two ways about it.

How Wood Beats the Boche

Consequently, arrangements have been made for the taking over of the woods (in France every pine grove is considered a forest), located in divisional areas and in various other points of France, for cutting by the A.E.F. These will be, in a sense, private preserves—subject, of course, to the supervision of the French forest authorities. Once they are backed up in proper style, there will be no cause for any company cook to serve out undone beans, to the undoing of the doughboy. Chopped wood makes for hot victuals, and hot victuals makes it hot for the Boche.

In case, however, that there is a lack of transportation for the wood cut in these areas, or that supply officers are unable to secure fuel wood from them through regular channels, or that the supply of wood already cut from the designated district is short, local cutting, as it is called in orders, may be resorted to. The proper step to take before cutting wood in your own vicinity is to find out from the Chief Quartermaster, what is the nearest tract authorized for cutting. If that cannot be done, the French Zone Major, the Town Major, or the nearest forest officer may be resorted to; and they, being human persons and knowing what it is to spend a cold and gasless winter, will probably help out.

Now comes the problem that hits everybody. Of course, there are forestry regiments and forestry regiments, but they can't be everywhere all of the time. They are employed for the most part on the big tracts, engaged in preparing fuel for the entire army. They are, more often than not, unavailable for your own little piece of backwoods, on the contents of which your shivering soul has set covetous eyes. That means that you—some of you—must do it yourselves.

Should You Sit Tight?

There's an order out about this, so pay close attention: "Men with previous experience in woodcutting will be selected for detail for this work so far as is practicable." Wow! If you've ever cut wood before, now's the time to say nothing, you say? Wait—if everybody who has ever cut wood shuts up the same way, they'll pick out a detail anyway, whether they've ever been woodsman before or not. So after all, it is best to own up.

"It should always be possible," says the order, "to indicate at least two men experienced in the use of the axe with every squad of eight or ten." Heads of large firms are hereby picked at once for woodcutting details—don't they know how to use the axe? These axe-men should be assigned to fell the trees, the order continues, "and the less experienced men employed in chopping up the trees when felled." In other words, the fellows who have played the wood-hacking game before get the trees down, and the rest of the gang do the mean trick of hitting the poor things when they're down.

Interpreter Has It Soft

The only graft job in a woodchopping detail is that of official interpreter, for there has to be somebody along with the axebearers for the French forest officer's instructions to filter through. French forest officers have by this time a fair knowledge of American army slang but have not progressed to the point where they can read the deaf and dumb alphabet like the "Ginns" outfit. Consequently, orders distinctly state that "an officer or soldier who understands French should accompany each woodcutting detail in order to make sure that the instructions are fully understood."

It is further specified that only the trees indicated by the French officer will be cut, and that the greatest of care must be taken to cut no trees marked or otherwise indicated for reservation. In most cases it will be found that the wood available for cutting is small coppices or saplings—as every detail that has been there knows—since the larger trees are almost invariably reserved for saw timber or other use.

In case there are men on woodchopping assignment who do not know how to save themselves work, the order directs that every effort should be made to keep the axes, hatchets, brush hooks, and buck saws well sharpened, particularly the axes and hatchets, for they are used in the heavy work of felling trees. The regulations of the French prescribe that trees must be cleanly cut close to the ground and that the surfaces of the stumps be left smooth.

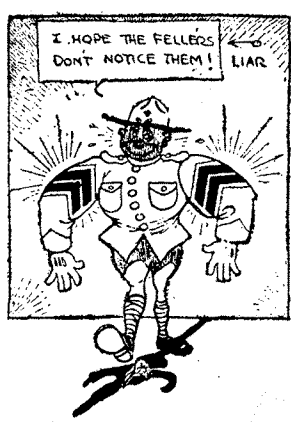
Then a Ray of Hope

Wood, it is directed by both French and American authorities, is to be cut into meter lengths, and stacked and measured in cubic meters. Branches less than one inch in diameter, being too small to pile, are to be bundled tightly into fagots about 1½ feet in diameter and not more than four yards long. These fagots as every present or past kitchen mechanic knows, are for kindling, and the order directs that

they "be used for kindling as close to the cutting area as possible, since it is not worth while to transport them long distances." Amen!

At the end of the order about the wood comes a ray of hope for those weary souls with blistered hands and aching backs who have been chopping, chopping, chopping all winter, as well as for those who have just begun to get a taste of it. "Utmost economy," runs the paragraph, "will be practiced in the wood-cutting operations since the supply of both material and labor is very limited. Close cutting and complete utilization of all material, small as well as large, is necessary."

CORP'RAL'S CHEVRONS



Oh, the General with his epauletts, lead in a parade.
The Colonel and the Adjutant a-sportin' of their brand,
The Major and the Skipper—none of 'em look so fine
As a newly minted corp'ral, comin' down the line!

Oh, the Bishop in his mitre, pacin' up the aisle,
The Governor, frock-coated, with a votes-for-women smile,
The Congressman, the Mayor, aren't in it, I opine,
With a newly minted corp'ral, comin' down the line!

TRENCHFOOT

The timely topic of how to prevent it, if not to cure—trench foot is the subject of a new A.E.F. official paper.

Trench foot, says the bulletin, belongs to the class of preventable diseases, and its occurrence among the troops of a command is an indication of a lack of good sanitary discipline therein. Experience has shown that the prevalence of this disease can be precluded by providing proper facilities to units for the care and treatment of the feet, and by a strict daily routine within organizations. Organization commanders are directly responsible, and by constant personal observation and supervision will satisfy themselves that these facilities are available, and that the members of the command are making full use of the opportunities afforded thereby.

The chief predisposing and exciting causes of trench foot are the existence of systematic diseases; insufficient nourishment, particularly hot foods, and lack of sleep and comfort; too frequent changes of shoes and socks, allowing accumulations of bacteria-laden secretions, with a consequent maceration of the skin of the feet; wearing of tight shoes, socks, leggings, puttees, or breeches; long continued standing or sitting without exercise, and with the feet and legs in constrained positions; prolonged exposures of the feet to the effects of wet and cold.

The commanding officers of all units will be held personally responsible that the following instructions are carried out under the personal supervision of a commissioned officer:

Pin Up Your Socks

That there is available a sufficient supply of dry, clean, well fitting, woolen socks. All men will be instructed to habitually wear socks without garters. The tendency of the sock to creep down is prevented by fastening to the breeches by means of safety pins.

That there is available for each man present not less than one change of shoes or boots; and that all boots and shoes are in serviceable condition, well fitted, thoroughly greased, and of sufficient size to permit of wearing woolen socks.

That the wearing of rubber boots for periods longer than a few hours be discouraged. Troops should be warned of the disadvantage of this form of footwear. Rubber boots always ventilate badly and remain moist after removal. In drying, they should be wiped out upon the inside after removal of the inner sole, and then hung by the inside straps suspended with the feet down. Neither puttees nor leggings will be worn under rubber boots.

That there are available at all times suitable rooms set aside for use as drying chambers; and that this space be of such arrangement and size as to adequately provide for the drying of all footwear or other clothing.

Oil the Feet Daily

That the feet of all are vigorously rubbed at least once each day, and preferably with some animal fat such as tallow or whale oil.

That active foot exercises be indulged in at frequent intervals, and from time to time that this be supplemented by removal of shoes and socks, with subsequent drying and massaging of the feet.

That special efforts be made to discover men who are suffering from corns, ingrown nails, blistered or inflamed feet. Any one of these conditions alters the gait and thereby decreases efficiency and increases the tendency to trench foot. All such cases should be placed under the surgeon's care without delay.

That every effort be made to reduce to the lowest possible minimum the necessity of the men performing duty with their feet in mud or water; this is frequently only a question of trench drainage and the elevation of duck boards.

Since an ample supply of woolen socks is a primary need, arrangements will be made for the delivery of dry socks to the men at the front, and for the

return of wet ones to the drying rooms, thereby insuring to each man at least one change a day.

Before marching into a forward area, company commanders will make the necessary inspections of their command to see that all shoes are well fitted, in good repair, and properly dubbined, and that each man has at least three pairs of serviceable woolen socks upon his person. At this time all members of the command will be warned against too tightly applied puttees. This danger is particularly prominent during wet weather, since dry puttees properly applied, which subsequently become wet, shrink three per cent of their length.

Hot Food Helps Cure

Since the lack of nourishment in general, and hot foods in particular, strongly predisposes to trench foot, the responsible commanders will make suitable arrangements for the supply of hot food to the men. Food containers for bringing up hot food will be provided, and cooks and kitchenettes will be placed in localities suitable for supplying food and drinks. There will be served each day to all men in the forward areas not less than two hot meals, preferably at midday and one between midnight and 5 a. m.

Plans for improving and constructing field kitchens, messes, or other special arrangements found necessary to properly carry this order into effect will be furnished upon application to Headquarters.

Foot powders and the various oils, greases, or ointment to be used in the prevention and treatment of trench foot and other diseases of the foot will be furnished by the Medical Department. The necessary supplies for application to boots, shoes, etc., will be supplied by the Quartermaster Corps.

The proper requisitions to meet the needs of this situation will be prepared and forwarded without delay to the various supply department depots for filling.

CARE FOR DOVES OF WAR

Pigeon Specialists of A.E.F. Send Out No Olive Branch.

The lad who kept pigeons as a boy back home on the farm is in high demand in the infantry.

Headquarters of a certain division recently sent out a call for soldiers who knew about pigeons. There had been previous calls for men who knew foreign languages, mess and mechanical work. The pigeon specialists' call would have sounded like a joke if the soldiers had not known that division headquarters never jokes.

Those who had kept pigeons answered the call and were taken out of their units to go to a French school. No drill, no fatigue for a week.

After seven days' schooling with the French, they returned to their regiments and were assigned to battalion headquarters. Each now wears on his arm a new insignia—a silver pigeon with spread wings embroidered on a black sleeve.

Their work some day may pull victory out of a bad situation or save the lives of many of their comrades. They go into the trenches by twos, with each battalion. A number of birds are kept near battalion headquarters in the trenches to carry emergency messages in case the enemy shelling should ever destroy the communication wires, and other usual means of communication.

The pigeon specialists keep their birds in a special deep dugout, safe from most shelling. The pigeons are on light diet, while in the trenches. When released, they are so hungry that they fly straight to their base.

Every few days one of the pigeon corps comes up with a crate of fresh birds, whereupon those which have done their "ton" in the trenches are released and a relay of another soldier starts back to bring up more birds.

A soldier from Sparta, Wis., is one of the best pigeon specialists so far discovered. He kept hundreds of birds back home, and expert in what technicalities knew more about their care than his French teachers.

APRES LA GUERRE

When I get back to Gotham, as in God's good time I may,
I'll feel just like a foreigner new come to Ellis Isle;

I'll try to figure out that it's the same old U. S. A.,
But I'll know it's something different all the while.

The bars will all be dry in that sad old bay-window,
And petticoated barbers will be lathering our chins;

I'll soon get used to that, but I won't know where I'm at
When I feel civilian trousers legs a-flapping 'round my shins.

When once again I lie in bed—please note that I say bed,
Not meaning six or seven slats and half a bale of straw—

I'll sleep until the cows come home, a pillow 'neath my head,
And perhaps my vertebrae won't be so raw.

The bugle's early blast will be something of the past,
I can take a pleasant hour just to manœuvre my face.

But I may pass half my day in an absent-minded way
A-looking for the leggings that should hold my pants in place.

'Twill all be just like heaven—a necktie on my chest,
No buttons on my pockets and a shirt that's not O.D.

Some underwear that fits me, a collar and a vest,
And not a stitch of old Equipment C.

It'll take a day or so to get used to it, I know,
But I'm doubtful if I'll ever be entirely at ease.

When a zephyr in its pranks circumnavigates my shanks
And starts a little game of tag 'round my unlimbered knees.

THINGS WE'D LIKE TO KNOW

Why is it we're always on the move? Can't we pay the rent?
Is there any bottom to the soil of France?

If there is a Y.M.C.A. man left who can't swear now?
How do they stop a French cart coming down hill?

The name of the signaller who, on being awakened when the gas alarm sounded, and told to put on his respirator, reached over for his sock?

Who was the sergeant-major who said it was just as safe at the guns as it is at the wagon lines?

Why Fritz saves Friday nights for his big strates?—From "The O-Pip," magazine of the 58th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery.

WHAT WE'D DO

We'd dig a week, or walk ten miles. We'd even go one better.
We'd walk an hour in "No Man's Land" if we'd only get a letter.

—From "The O-Pip."

ETIQUETTE TALKS FOR DOUGHBOYS

MESS MANNERS

BY BRAN MASIE

Rules for table deportment in the army are far different from those in civilian life. As anyone who has ever heard a company at mess will readily recognize. To begin with, it is impossible for a man to drink out of the tumbler, for the simple reason that there isn't so much piece of crockery. Thus one of the cardinal principles of correct behavior at table has got to be abandoned from the start.

Leaving the spoon in the canteen cup, and thereby deflecting some of the undue heat from the cup's interior to the surface of the spoon, is perfectly permissible and should be practiced on all occasions when the coffee is actually hot; that is, when the drinker happens to be pretty well up forward in the mess line. Warning one's chilled hands on the exterior of the cup, meanwhile exclaiming, "Oh, boy!" is also condoned in army usage. The grand old indoor sport of blowing into the coffee to cool it is likewise de rigueur, and also excellent for developing the lungs. In the most select army circles it is customary to save a little of the coffee to loosen up the goo in the mess tin when cleaning it.

The bread slab may with perfect propriety be used as an auxiliary plate, and on it may be superimposed such articles as jam (if there is any), cheese (if there is any), butter (if by any stretch of imagination there is any), or oleo (as there is pretty apt to be if there is anything at all). The bread-slab plate may also be used for supererogatory beans that will not fit into the mess kit, and for strips of breakfast bacon that would be highly offensive at contact with the humble rice in the mess pan proper. This use of the bread-slab, however, is a bit rough on the underside of the bread if the mess hall table happens to be dirty. (Medical officers are requested to skip this paragraph.)

The large and only spoon may be used for any vial that lends itself to the shoveling process, regardless of the etiquette dictates already learned by the doughboy. That means that the large spoon does not need to be washed from the table at the conclusion of the soup course. It remains in action all the way through the engagement, from oysters to recall. In case the fork becomes a casualty, or is missing, or is detached from active service for use as a candlestick supporter, the spoon may with perfect propriety be employed as a meat stealer while the knife does the uglier cutting work. In general it may be set down that, for eating purposes, the spoon is far easier on the inside of the face than is the knife.

Eating with the knife, however, is perfectly au fait in exclusive army circles, as, owing to quick shifts of base, both spoon and fork may become missing, or loaned to other units for purposes of food control. French peas, when available, should be thoroughly mashed before an attempt is made to elevate them with the knife blade. When used in this way the knife blade should be kept parallel with the surface of the table for in open field eating, with the surface of the terrain, and the elbow of the knife elevator should not be extended more than forty-five degrees. Extreme care should be

taken when conducting stew and other open order dishes to the face by the knife route, for landscape decoration in France is in sole charge of the camouflage branch of the Signal Corps.

The O.D. napkin, or blouse sleeve, is about the only article left for face cleaning purposes at the conclusion of the meal, though it is understood that the Red Cross has on the way a large supply of hand embroidered napkins bearing the use's monogram, regimental and company or battery designation. Pending the arrival of the Red Cross serviettes, the O.D. napkin should be used sparingly inasmuch as faces are much easier to clean than blouses.

As to the minor points of table deportment, it may be said that not only is sopping the hardtack in the coffee untenable; it is actually required, if the hardtack is to be eaten at all. Bacon, stray slices of pork that may (by great courage) find their way in between beans, and stray chunks of meat that may, when the cook is not looking, find their way into the meat stew are to be taken in the fingers whenever the spirit moves. It is also perfectly permissible (as it is not at home) to ask for a second helping of soup, for soup as often the be-all and the end-all of an army meal. Neither should anyone refrain from asking for seconds just because there is company at table. In fact, the man who does not consistently and persistently ask for seconds is to be rated a distinct ignoramus.

When one is a guest at a British mess, one should not comment audibly on the substitution of tea for coffee or of cheese for meat. It is best to accept the tea with good grace, and to try to drink it; remembering all the while that one's British hosts not only can't help it, but consider it a delicacy. The same rule applies to the cheese, save that the cheese may, without giving offense, be transported to the neighboring canteen and there consumed with the pleasing accompaniment of the canteen's staple liquid product.

In open field eating, such as informal luncheon parties back of the lines or informal war dinners in the lines themselves, all rules for table deportment are suspended, all etiquette is relaxed. In fact so far may this dictum be carried that it is not only excusable, but to be expected, if one swears aloud when a burst of shrapnel, seeking its mate, lands kerplunk in the middle of one's pan of beans.

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THE BIRDMAN'S DAY

The bird man gay ascends each day to hand Dame Chance a trouncing; with a wile he wends his way from cloud to cloud a-bouncing; it must be great to aviate mid storm-clouds gayly whisking, to loop-the-loop with joyous whooping, one's epidermis risking; without a care he skins the air and flitteth like a swallow; he climbs on high toward the sky, mid fleecy clouds to wallow; he madly skips and throws back-flips amid the gusty breezes, in heat or cold the bird man bold each chance for glory seizes. What though he breaks his neck or takes a fall from heights appalling? He risks his bun to strafe the Hun nor fears his motor's stalling. His crank-shaft breaks a dive he takes; it causes him to worry; he coplanes down without a frown nor gets into a hurry; by spiral dives he often tries to fool some vexing Herman; his article of grit is full, he smiteth oft the German. Machine-gun fire and dangers dire he meets and never shivers; he gayly laughs and photo-

graphs a few more forts and rivers. He skimmeth through the ether blue nor heedeth countless dangers; he hath no qualm, his nerve is calm, for fear and he are strangers. No care is his, he is a whiz, he flitteth with disaster; with quiet air he risks his hair to prove he's Fritz's master. In heat or cold the bird man bold each chance for glory seizes, he madly skips and throws back-flips amid the gusty breezes!

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